

Illinois Early Learning Council
Family and Community Engagement Meeting
February 4, 2014 10am – 12pm
Illinois Action for Children
4753 N Broadway, Chicago, IL 60604

Committee and Subcommittee co-chairs:

Maria Whelan (IAFC), **George Davis** (City of Rockford Human Services), **Carie Bires** (Ounce), **Leah Pouw** (IAFC), **Granada Williams** (CEDA), **Choua Vue** (IAFC)

Meeting Participants:

TeeNeka Jones-Gueye, Juliet Bromer, Granada Williams, Morelle Davis, Veronica Mercado, Fiona Anderson, Edna Navarro Vidaurre, Beth Lakier, Carmen Garcia, Christene Nicpon, Angela Bailey, Marianne Pokorny, Dawn Thomas, Rene Tetrick, Maria Whelan, Chris Rosene, Carie Bires, Leah Pouw, Sasha Robey, Kathy Volano, Madelyn James, Sergio Hernandez, Donna Emmons, George Davis, Lannon Broughton, Joy Bah

I. Welcome and Introductions

- a. Approved minutes from October 3, 2015

II. Minutes were approved

III. *Going Above and Beyond* presentation by Juliet Bromer, Erikson Institute

- a. Study background
- b. Study design
- c. Findings
- d. Discussion

IV. Presentation Discussion

- a. There was discussion that the report reflects reality- it accurately captured the experience of providers
- b. Maria made the comment that we – as a field – have gotten so formal, which comes along with its own benefits as well as drawbacks
 - She used to work at Carole Robertson where parent-provider relationships developed extremely organically; this is harder these days with all of liabilities and regulations
 - Juliet responded that this kind of informality in family and community engagement still occurs, we just don't know how to measure it
- c. Christene inquired if any research had been done around best practices regarding a number for case management ratio
 - Juliet stated that this study didn't delve into that discussion
 - Granada illumined that it's hard to get funding sources to financially support what in reality is the ideal for providers on the ground
 - George commented that over the years he has seen the erosion of focus (and funding) on family engagement; this is one of first areas to get cut (that is, family workers before classroom teachers)

V. Subcommittee work plans

- a. Subcommittee Co-Chair Granada shared that Principles and Practices has put together a work plan draft that has yet to be shared with the Subcommittee
 - The work plan takes a close look at community engagement specifically
 - There is additionally a new area that the Office of Early Childhood Development is curious for us to look at; there is consideration to weave this bucket into the work plan
- b. Similar to the update for Principles and Practices, Leah shared that All Families Served is also working on draft of its work plan
 - The Subcommittee had originally determined 4 objectives, but it is now narrowing them down, and at the same day (2/4) meeting, was planning to move forward with focusing in on priority populations and leveraging new federal money

VI. Update on the State Child Care Budget Crisis

- a. There was a fact sheet given out to those in attendance (that was also e-mailed ahead of time)
- b. A notice sent out from IDHS to parents and providers this past week stated that state funds will run dry after this February, and there will only be federal funds available after that
 - The notice also referenced looming program changes, but it did not give specifics
 - Even the prospect of going a few months without payment is significant to the field because child care providers in Illinois largely consist of small business, family child care, and nonprofits, all of which by and large do not run on large lines of credit
- c. Maria's Speculation
 - In order to make up the deficit, perhaps a policy change will make it so that school age kids don't get reimbursed, or undocumented kids are no longer covered, or the income eligibility for families will be reduced, or perhaps a waiting list will be instituted
 - The state needs to come up with \$300 million – for a \$900 million program – in a matter of months
 - Juliet inquired as to the historical context of the crisis- has something like this ever been faced before?
 - Maria states that the crisis is at least twenty times worse than anything that has ever been faced by the state before
 - Edna shared from her Innovation Zone work that some providers reported parents not believing the magnitude of the issue
 - Madelyn resonated that there is a disconnect with the public; what is needed is for parents to have something to take to their employers to convey the gravity of the situation
 - a. Maria responded that IAFC's policy team is working with the Illinois Retail Merchants Association
 - Another participant agreed that some parents aren't even aware of how supported their providers are by state funds

VII. Early Learning Council Updates

- a. Early Learning Council

- Since the ELC doesn't currently have co-chairs, it has been difficult determining a clear direction of status as a body
 - In other words, the ELC is floundering due to a leadership vacuum
- The next full ELC meeting will on February 23
- b. Early Learning Council Executive Committee
 - The Exec Committee meeting was truncated due to it being over phone instead of in person
 - As a result, no Committee updates were shared
- c. Local Agency Updates
 - Chicago Public Schools (CPS)
 - Just recently, the second meeting of the family and community engagement parent advisory group was held
 - Head Start is doing a daddy-daughter get together this Saturday
 - The Preschool For All office is currently developing a resource handbook for parents
 - a. The resource for Head Start parents is currently being updated
 - CPS
 - a. Opening up registration from 3/2 – 5/1 for next year
 - b. The district will also be offering preschool fairs this year
 - c. Next year 55 (45 conversion to full day, 10 new) new classrooms will be created as a part of the preschool expansion grant
 - i. The program locations will all be in high need areas, but are still being determined
 - d. Another priority the CPS is working on is full day programming for diverse learners

Next Steps/ Upcoming Meetings

- See attached page "FY15 Meeting Calendar"

Upcoming Meetings Calendar

Full FCE Committee

11 am – 1 pm

- April 7th 2015 (Tues)
- July 15th 2015 (Wed)

All Families Served Subcommittee

10 am – noon

- May 12th 2015 (Tues)

Principles & Practices Subcommittee

10 am – noon

- May 14th 2015 (Thurs)